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SERJEANT MAJOR

IAMES CHVDLEIGH

HIS DECLARATION TO HIS COUNTRY-MEN.

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CHYDLEIGH

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Mr *James Chudleigh* his Declaration.

Deare Countrymen.

BEcauſe the ſcandalous reports of certaine factious hot-brained Perſons in the Citty of *Exeter*, have imputed Gods viſitation of our ſinnes upon the Army late at *Stratton*, to treachery of mine: I ſhall beg ſo much of your patience, as to enforme your ſelves from this Paper, the true ſtate of that affaire. 'Twas not without exceſſive continued paines, that I had put that Tumultuous body into a ſerviceable poſture in the field, and I appeale to any man of ſo much honeſty and honour, as dares ſpeake truth in the behalfe of a dejected Priſoner, whether I was not alwayes buſied in the heat of the Skirmiſh where ever it hapned to be, from the very beginning till I was totally forſaken, both by the Officers and Souldiers, except thoſe that dyed by me, and the Battell loſt ſome teſtimony, wherein was my Cane broken in my hand by a ſhot, my Horſe ſhot under me, and at laſt a hurt in my head, whereby I loſt ſome blood. Thus (miſerable in all appearance) being abſolutely deſtitute of any thing, but the protection of my God which never yet failed me, I charged ſingle through a diviſion of Musketiers, till I came up cloſe to the Officer that led them, whó I took for Sir *Bevill Grenvile*, for his back parts were very like him, and inſtead of uſing my Armes to take his life, which was then very much in my power, (though not without a certaine loſſe of mine owne, for all the Souldiers preſently upon the ſtop encloſed

meround,) I yeelded my selfe into his hands, and I found him a most gallant Gentleman, for when I had delivered my Sword, he received many blowes to beare them off from me, and suppressed the rage of the Souldiers towards me, with the hazard of his owne life, his name is *Lewis Tremaine*, Ensigne to Sir *Bevill Grenvile*, to whom, being close at hand with a stand of Pikes, he led me, and I shall ever acknowledge as long as I breath in spite of the Malignity of these factious Spirits in *Exeter*, or such as they have corrupted by their Hypocrisie in other parts of this County, that I received so much humanity and noble favour from Sir *Bevill Grenvile*, and the rest of the Commanders of the *Cornish* Army, as made that a greater griefe to me to have been an Enemy to so much gallantry and vertue, then that now I was a Prisoner; nevertheless the sad estate which I conceived my Countrymen to be in, from whom it had pleased God, for reasons above my reach, thus to withdraw his favour, wounded yet deeper my bleeding heart, & so much the more, because I resented heavily the Justice of the Cause, which we had laboured to Support, being as I conceived, the Iust Rights of our gratious King and his Subjects, limited by the Lawes and the Purity of the true Protestant Religion, which the high Court of Parliament had instructed us, these Gentlemen whose hands I was thus fallen into, had endeavoured to corrupt, and I was sufficiently sensible, that those morall vertues which I saw they were endowed with, in so eminent a degree, might be companions for ought I knew (though hardly credible) of deceitfull hearts; and that the Iustce of the Quarrell on either side is not alwayes demonstrated by the chance of Warre, thus releeving my perplexity with sadnesse, and resolving to spend my dayes in griefe, till it should please God to put an end to the miserable Distractions of this wretched Kingdome, I was visited by some of the most eminent Commanders of the Army, with whom I fell into discourse of these very points; wherein all of us agreed upon the necessity of preservation of the Law in the priviledge that it gives this Nation in Parliament, as well as in the Iust Prerogative which it allowes His Royall Majesty, without which this Kingdom is necessarily subject to Arbitrary Government, & the Rights both of the King & People are vanisht into an Aerie title. But 'twas not long till we came to this conclusion, That as evill Counsells had heretofore been prevalent

valent to the prejudice of the Common-wealth, so the satisfaction given by His Majesty was exceeding great and beyond the expectation of all moderate men; That the objections against His Majesties Counsell of continuall endeavours at present to force the Parliament by Armes, are cleerly answered by His Majesties many Protestations, and for the fulfilling of those Protestations to accommodate the differences of the Kingdom, His Majesty will not stick to give any assurance that shall be thought reasonable; and likewise all the Commanders of this Army are content to put it under their hands, and to take a solemne oath as punctuall and as strong as can be invented, that when soever His Majesty shall be drawne by any Counsell or meanes whatsoever, to neglect those Protestations, that then they will totally desert the Service they are engaged in, and for the present they will be content to use the whole power, which His Majesty hath invested them with, to give a free pardon to all such in these Westerne Counties as will lay downe Armes, and be content to be governed by the knowne Lawes setled by Act of Parliament; & what assurance soever shall be demanded on His Majesties behalfe for the setling of a Religious, Honourable, and a firme Peace they are ready to give. Now whether this Inclination towards the Peace and Justice of this Kingdome hath possest these Gentlemen from the beginning of the Warre, or whether by the continued dispute of the difference by which the Kingdome is divided, the matter is now so anotomised? as that the quintessence of truth extract from partiality to either side, is eminently perspicuous, or else whether the blood shed betwixt these two Counties by misunderstandings one of another, which cannot but move all Christian hearts to a Compassionate beseeching of the Almighty God to sheath his sword, hath had stronger operation upon the hearts and Consciences of these noble Gentlemen, then the factions of *Exeter* are likely to admit of on their part, is not in my opinion materiall to stand in debate of, only I conceive my selfe bound in Conscience for truths sake, to assure all honest well meaning Christians upon the hopes that I have of salvation, and upon the faith and honour of a Gentleman and a Souldier, that I never saw an Army freer from vice, nor more religiously inclined, then I perceive the whole Genious of this Army to be, nor did I ever see more heartily cleere and earnest expressions of affection to a religious and a

just Peace then the Commanders of this Army are full off: more then which, (with so ingenious offers of the meanes to conclude that) cannot possibly be expected from humane flesh, and though it hath been accounted Treason in the opinion of the factious Tumult of the Citty of *Exeter*, whose interest hath ever shewed it selfe against any Peace but an absolute Conquest, and an utter extirpation of those that unconvict, they doe but once thinke ungodly, that I should represent my knowledge of the state of this matter to those Deputy-Lievtenants that I conceived in all respects fittest to judge of that, and to recommend it to the whole County, yet my duty to God and to my Country, will not give me leave to obscure so faire a meanes of the happinesse of this Kingdom for any scandall whatsoever, or to prove my selfe in the face of Heaven so cowardly a Christian, as to comply with damnable hypocrisie against so cleer a truth: who knowes not that nothing will be so certaine and necessary a destruction to the Country as to continue it the seate of Warre, and what moderate man is there, that cannot see that nothing in the World could have extorted from this Army in the glorious Condition, that it now is, such a gallant offer of a Religious, honourable, and a firme Peace, but their owne Nobleneſse and sincerity of heart towards truth, and the reall welfare of the Common-wealth. Let us not involve our selves with the obstinacy of a few opinionated men, whiles 'tis apparent as the case stands, how that their Cause is accompanied with nothing of Religion, but it's abused name, what Religion is there now in *Cornwall* but the same that we professe, or what bondage is there to those that doe not wilfully thrust themselves into it? Let us but deferre the cutting of one anothers throats, till novelties in Law and in Religion begin to shew themselves. We are then as capable to dye for the defence of truth, as now for the suspition, the power of the sword being still entrusted in our hands. Many a well meaning Christian takes a by path to Heaven, and knowes not that he wanders, but, Oh, the irrecoverable unhappines of those that refuse to be led into the way, I know it concernes the interest of those that have set themselves against Peace, with such as they are pleas'd to call the wicked, how undeservedly soever, to raise scandalls upon me, and I am well informed that the report of my betraying the Army at *Stratton*, was invented after the view of my Letters to my Father, with Sir

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Iohn Bamfield, and Sir *Nicholas Martin* to accommodate the differences of theſe Counties, for which the Cittizens of *Exeter* have beyond all example Committed the Herauld that was employed, upon the falſe pretence of eating Scroales of paper, and have caſt a jealouſy upon ſome of thoſe Gentlemen that hitherto have been thought by all the World farre more worthy then ſuch Creatures as themſelves are, to ſteere the affaires of the Commonwealth in theſe parts, but as I never avoyded danger to ſerve my Countrey when I lead them in the field, ſo I will now preſſe through all difficulties in ſpite of oppoſition to mediate, and by all honeſt means to proſecute its Peace, and ſuch as ſhall appeare to unite in my opinion, I am ready to lead or to follow, or to Comrade with, to reduce this obſtinate handfull in the Citty of *Exeter*, that are the only means to deny their Country its Capacity of ſo great a bleſſing; and herein I am reſolved to boaſt the loyalty which I owe His Majeſty as well as my dear affection to you that have thus farre intruſted me with your lives, and for my behaviour at *Stratton* I refuſe no mans teſtimony, of thoſe that durſt put themſelves ſo farre into danger as to be eye witneſſes, but for my Lord of *Stamford*, and ſuch others as ranne away, whoſe Treaſon really it was, I know that concerns their intereſt to ſecond this accuſation upon mee, having no other way to extenuate their intolerable Cowardice, but becauſe they are People that I am never likely to meet with in the field, I leave them to the Scourge of their own Conſcience, and to paſſe the time in making Aldermen, and women believe them valiant, whiles all the world beſides knows the contrary. And now I challenge Maliee it ſelfe to accuſe me in all this, of the leaſt Circumſtance of untruth or fallacy, ſo I beſeech God to diſpoſe you to accept of ſuch a Peace, as for ought I know will ſhortly be denied you upon your knees, And that the groanes of this bleeding Country may not riſe up in judgement againſt the Barbariſme of thoſe, that by impriſoning the meſſenger of Peace, have endeavoured to deſtroy the Balſome that ſhould cure the wounds, which for ought I ſee themſelves have made.

FINIS.